

OFFERING HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES TO THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES REGARDING THE HORRIFIC VIOLENCE AT VIRGINIA TECH AND TO STUDENTS, FACULTY, ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF AND THEIR FAMILIES WHO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED

SPEECH OF

HON. THELMA D. DRAKE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, this has been a very somber week for the Commonwealth of Virginia as we have watched tragedy unfold on one of our proud universities.

As Virginia's largest University, the Virginia Tech family extends into every corner of our Commonwealth and we have all been affected by Monday's events.

Unfortunately, we are not able to explain such unthinkable tragedies. Furthermore, mere words seem small under the weight of such a heartbreaking event. However, I express my deepest sympathy for the victims and their families and I offer a prayer of support and condolence for the Virginia Tech community.

As Virginia, and indeed the entire Nation, grieves so many young lives being lost, it is important to remember the grace, love and goodness exhibited by those who survived this horrible tragedy.

I was inspired by the ability of students, alumni, faculty, family and neighbors to come together driven by a sense of community and compassion to support others in their time of need.

As I took part in yesterday's convocation at Cassell Coliseum, I was encouraged by the leadership demonstrated by Gov. Tim Kaine, President George W. Bush and the numerous dedicated educators at Virginia Tech.

The coming days, weeks, and months will continue to be difficult ones as the Virginia Tech community comes to terms with what took place on a dark day in April. But it will also be a time of healing and I am confident that Hokie nation will be able to come back stronger because of the compassion and character that has been displayed since this tragedy.

Just as the heinous actions of one troubled individual so obviously filled with hate has left us grasping for answers, the reaction of the Virginia Tech family gave reason to make all Virginians proud and demonstrate the tremendous promise of our future generation.

COMMEMORATING HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY AND REFLECTING UPON THE GENOCIDE IN DARFUR

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, last Sunday marked Holocaust Remembrance Day, which honors the memory of the six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust during World War II. We are now in the midst

of the Days of Remembrance established by the United States Congress as our Nation's commemoration of these victims. We remember the Holocaust so that the lessons and responsibilities left from this tragedy are not lost.

Always, but especially now, it is imperative that we remember and take action against the genocide that is currently taking place in Darfur. As we look to the past to remember those that perished at the hand of Nazi Germany, we must not forget the 2,500,000 Darfuri civilians targeted and displaced because of their ethnic or racial identity or the more than 300,000 people killed thus far. Tragically, over 1,600 villages have been destroyed by Sudanese government soldiers and government-backed militias. The growing number of destroyed homes and lives is a testament to the fact that simply remembering is not enough.

Madam Speaker, as you know, children are among the most helpless victims of any genocide. One million of the six million Jews that were killed in the Holocaust were children. Jewish children were targeted by the Nazi regime, and now the children of Darfur suffer the brutal effects that burning villages, shootings, rapes, and the search for refuge have on the youngest victims of this tragedy.

My heart is warmed by the work of grassroots organizations in South Florida and across the country that bring attention to the crisis in Darfur. We must heed the lessons of Holocaust Remembrance Day and make sure that another Holocaust never happens again. Racially inspired hatred has surfaced many times in the decades since the Holocaust, and it is our duty to stop the disaster in Darfur and make it the last genocide of the 21st century.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TAX EXEMPT QUALIFICATION FOR FEDERALLY GUARANTEED WATER, WASTEWATER, AND OTHER ESSENTIAL COMMUNITY FACILITY LOANS

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise to inform my colleagues of legislation I have introduced today to assist some of our Nation's most underserved communities in funding essential infrastructure.

The legislation that I have proposed will permit interest on federally guaranteed water, wastewater, and other essential community facility loans to also qualify to be tax exempt. I introduced similar legislation in the 109th Congresses.

Rural communities throughout America continue to face challenges in accessing basic needs. We can improve this situation by supporting the development of necessary infrastructure such as dependable water and wastewater systems, and essential community facilities like schools, hospitals, and police and fire stations.

Unfortunately, many of these same communities struggle to acquire sufficient funding to support local development projects. Increased access to federally guaranteed tax exempt loans would provide significant assistance in these efforts.

I believe the incentives offered in this bill will allow small and rural communities better opportunities to receive increased credit to finance community facility projects.

I urge my colleagues to consider supporting this bill.

IN HONOR AND IN MEMORY OF STAFF SERGEANT HARRISON BROWN OF PRICHARD, ALABAMA

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a young man from the First Congressional District of Alabama who recently made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of his country while helping to spread freedom abroad.

Army Staff Sgt. Harrison Brown, formerly of Prichard, was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, based at Fort Benning, Georgia. He was killed in combat earlier this month while bravely serving and protecting this great nation in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Duck," as he was known to his friends, joined the Army 13 years ago to provide for his wife and children. During his career in the Army, including multiple tours of duty in Iraq, Sgt. Brown set a standard of excellence and displayed the qualities of discipline, devotion, and dedication to country that are the hallmarks of men and women throughout the long and distinguished history of the American military.

A 1994 graduate of Blount High School, "Duck" played baseball and basketball and was a standout wide receiver on the varsity football team. Blount won the state 5A high school football championship while "Duck" was on the team. He went on to play one year of college football at Tuskegee University on scholarship before he joined the Army.

Madam Speaker, at this difficult time, it is only appropriate for us to pause and give thanks to God that there are still young men like Harrison Brown. His life and actions personify the very best America has to offer. I feel certain his many friends and family, as well as his comrades in the United States Army, while mourning the loss of this fine young man, are also taking this opportunity to remember his many accomplishments and to recall the fine gift they each received simply from knowing him and having him as an integral part of their lives.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to take a moment and pay tribute to Sgt. Harrison Brown and his selfless devotion to not only our country and the freedom we enjoy, but to a people who are in the demanding but important stages of a new life—a new freedom—in their own land.

We should also remember his wife, Delisha Brown; their three children; his mother, Chris Ann Brown; his sister, Mary Dozier; and his other relatives and many friends. Our prayer is that God will give them all the strength and courage that only He can provide to sustain them during the difficult days ahead.

It was Joseph Campbell who said, "A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself."